

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A method for predicting the risk of ~~a disease~~ dental caries in a subject, said method comprising:
 - providing an unfractionated saliva sample from said subject;
 - contacting an aliquot of said saliva with one or more lectins under conditions that allow said one or more lectins to bind to one or more lectin-binding components of said saliva;
 - detecting the amount of bound lectin; and
 - comparing the amount of bound lectin to the amount known to bind a saliva sample from a control subject, wherein the amount of bound lectin is indicative of the risk of ~~said disease~~ dental caries.
2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said saliva sample is an unstimulated saliva sample.
3. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said lectin-binding component is an oligosaccharide.
4. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said lectin is selected from the group consisting of DSL, ECL, PSA, WGA, UEA, MALI, MAA, PNA, AAL, LTL, MAL II, JAC, LEL, SNA, PTL I, ACL, GSL II, VVA, BPL, WFL, SJA, MPL, GNL, HHL, CCA, NPL, STL, PHA-L, PHA-E, GSL I, DBA, HMA, EEA, LPA, and PTL II.
5. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said lectin is not PNA.
6. (Original) The method of claim 4, wherein said lectin is MALI.

7. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said one or more lectins are selected from the group consisting of AAL, LTL and UEA 1.

8. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said one or more lectins are selected from the group consisting of DSL, ECL, PSA, MAL I, PNA, AAL, LTL, MAL II, JAC, LEL, PTL I, GSL II, VVA, BPL, SJA, MPL, and CCA, and said subject is an adult.

9. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said one or more lectins are selected from the group consisting of ACL, PNA, LTL, PSA, MAL II, MAA, STL, PTL I, LEL, DSL, ECL, AAL, VVA, GNLI, CCA, SNA, JAC, WFL, SJA, MALI, and BPL, and said subject is a child.

10.-14. (Canceled)

15. (Currently amended) The method of claim ~~14, wherein said procedure~~ 1, wherein said contacting comprises: applying a drop of said saliva to a matrix material; and contacting the matrix with a solution containing said one or more lectins.

16. (Currently amended) The method of claim ~~[[14]]~~ 1, wherein said one or more lectins are coupled to a reporter selected from the group consisting of dyes, chemiluminescent compounds, enzymes, fluorescent compounds, biotin, haptens, radioluminescent compounds, and radioactive-labeled biomolecules.

17.-25. (Canceled)

26. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said subject is a human.

27.-28. (Canceled)

29. (Currently amended) The method of claim 28 1, wherein said dental caries is selected from the group consisting of early-onset dental caries, adult dental caries, root caries, DFT, DMF, DMFS, dfs, dft, dmft, dmfs, and dfs/t.

30.-47. (Canceled)

48. (Currently amended) A method for preventing or reducing the risk of ~~a disease~~ dental caries, comprising: providing an unfractionated saliva sample from a subject; contacting an aliquot of said saliva with one or more lectins under conditions that allow said one or more lectins to bind to a lectin-binding component of said saliva; detecting the amount of bound lectin; comparing the amount of bound lectin to the amount known to bind a saliva sample from a control subject, wherein the amount is proportional to the risk of ~~a disease~~ dental caries in said subject; and administering a therapeutic reagent to said subject when the content of said component in said saliva is above or below the level contained in a normal control.

49. (Currently amended) A kit for detecting ~~a disease~~ dental caries comprising: means for collecting a saliva sample; means for measuring the amount of a lectin-binding component in said sample; and an oral fluid standard for comparing the amount of said component in said sample.

50.-53. (Canceled)

54. (Currently amended) The kit of claim ~~54~~ 49, wherein said dental caries is selected from the group consisting of early-onset dental caries, adult dental caries, root caries, DFT, DMF, DMFS, dfs, dft, dmft, dmfs, and dfs/t.

55. (Original) The kit of claim 49, which is a Western blot format.

56. (Original) An assay device for detecting the presence of lectin-binding components in a saliva sample, said device comprising: a sample receiving zone comprising a first matrix material for receiving an aliquot of said sample; and a control zone comprising a second matrix material having at least one control lectin-binding compound of a known concentration bound to the surface of said second matrix material.

57. (Original) The device of claim 56, wherein said sample receiving zone matrix material is selected from the group consisting of nitrocellulose, cotton, polyester, rayon, nylon, polyethersulfone, and polyethylene.

58. (Original) The device of claim 56, wherein said sample receiving and control zones are affixed to the top side of a semi-rigid support.

59. (Original) The device of claim 58, wherein semi-rigid support comprises polypropylene, poly(vinyl chloride), propylene, or polystyrene.

60. (Original) An assay device for detecting the presence of lectin-binding components in a saliva sample, said device comprising: a sample receiving zone comprising a first matrix material and one or more lectins bound to said matrix material; and a control zone comprising a second matrix material and having at least one control saliva sample of a known concentration.